

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of claims:

1. – 3. (Cancelled)

4. (Currently amended) A method of evaluating onset or onset possibility of rheumatoid arthritis in a human subject, the method comprising the steps of:
detecting whether a gene coding a protein comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ. ID NO.:1 is present homozygously in the subject; and
evaluating the onset or onset possibility of rheumatoid arthritis in the subject;
wherein the homozygous presence of the gene in the subject is indicative of an increased step of evaluating comprises determining that the onset possibility of onset of
rheumatoid arthritis is increased if the gene is present homozygously in the subject.

5. – 10. (Cancelled)

11. (New) The method of claim 4, wherein the rheumatoid arthritis is sporadic rheumatoid arthritis.